REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action mailed April 27, 2005, Applicant amends his application and requests reconsideration. In this Amendment no claims are cancelled, and claims 19-21 are added so that claims 1-21 are now pending.

Pursuant to the species election requirement and an election, only claims 12, 13, and 16 were examined as reading on the embodiment of Figure 16. While the Examiner treated the election without traverse, of course the absence of a traversal does not affect the applicability of 37 CFR 1.141. Thus, upon allowance of claim 12, Applicant intends to rejoin to the prosecution the clams depending from claim 12 and not previously examined, namely claims 14, 15, and 17. In addition, newly added claims 19 and 20 depend from claim 13, an examined claim, so that those claims must be considered now as consistent with the election and reading on the elected embodiment of Figure 16. New claim 21 depends from claim 17 which, in turn, depends from claim 13. Both claims must be rejoined to the prosecution upon the allowance of claim 12.

The error in the specification at page 29 has been corrected. In addition, minor errors at pages 32, 37, and 38 of the specification are corrected. No new matter is added.

The examined claims were rejected as indefinite. In response, amendments have been made that overcome these rejections. The final paragraph of claim 12 no longer refers to setting any voltage at the first internal node. The reference to the first internal node has simply been removed from the claim at the location identified by the Examiner. Line 16 of examined claim 12 has been clarified, adding "the" at the appropriate location. The word "corresponding" in claim 13 has been replaced by the more precise term "connected", overcoming the rejection as to form. The fourth transistor, formerly recited in claim 16, is described in amended claim 12 along with its relationship to the other elements of that claim 12. With regard to the embodiment of Figure 16, the fourth transistor corresponds to transistor NT5. Of course, in making reference to that embodiment here, no limitation is being placed upon the scope of claim 12. Rather, reference is made to the embodiment encompassed by the claim merely to aid the Examiner.

In this Amendment, as previously mentioned, claim 12 is amended to describe the fourth transistor and its interconnection and interaction with the other elements of the claimed semiconductor device. As described in the patent application with regard to the embodiment of Figure 16, sometimes referred to as the Sixth Embodiment, the fourth transistor provides, in appropriate circumstances, a flow path for leakage current from the second transistor. Ultimately, all of stored current is drained so that second transistor is then open, preventing leakage current flow, thereby reducing the power consumption of the driver circuit when in a steady state.

In the embodiment of Figure 16, the control circuit includes a timing circuit 10 and inverter INV3. The structure of that timing circuit embodiment is described in more detail in added claim 19. The fifth and sixth transistors mentioned in claim 19 correspond to the transistors 1 and 2 of the embodiment of Figure 16. Further, new claim 20 describes the timing circuit as additionally including an inverter, corresponding to the inverter 3 of the embodiment of Figure 16, and the interconnection between the sixth transistor and the output node provided by that inverter.

Claims 14 and 15 encompass the embodiments of Figures 18 and 21, respectively. Claim 16, an examined claim, has been amended in view of the relocation of the fourth transistor to claim 12. In addition, what is apparent from the original language of claim 16 is made more explicit. That claim, as examined, pointed out that a different gate oxide film is employed in the fourth field-effect transistor as compared to the gate oxide films of the first, second, and third field-effect transistors. As discussed further below, the Examiner misinterpreted the language of the claim which described gate oxides of different compositions. The use of transistors having gate oxides of different compositions and, therefore, with different dielectric constants, is described in the patent application from page 45, line 27 through page 46, line 4. The description there supports the amendment of claim 16, explaining that the different gate oxide films have different dielectric constants.

Claim 17 and newly added claim 21, which depends from claim 17, encompass the embodiment of Figure 25 of the patent application.

Claims 12 and 13 were rejected as anticipated by Kano (U.S. Patent 5,166,555). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

While a lengthy explanation could be given of various differences between the circuit illustrated in Figure 2 of Kano and the semiconductor device of claim 12, both as to structure and function, it is sufficient to note that there is no transistor in that circuit of Kano that could correspond to the fourth transistor of claim 12. Therefore, claim 12 and its dependent claims, examined and unexamined, cannot be anticipated by Kano. In brief, the Examiner identified G14 as the second node in Kano. There is no transistor in Kano having a control terminal connected to the input node and that is connected between the second voltage, i.e. ground, and both of the second node and the control circuit, identified as elements 32-34 of Kano. Not even Kano's transistor 39 begins to meet that requirement and, in addition, that transistor 39 has already been identified by the Examiner as corresponding to the second transistor of claim 12. The rejection simply cannot be maintained as to either of claims 12 and 13.

Claim 16 was rejected as unpatentable over Kano in view of Sessions (U.S. Patent 6,166,580). This rejection is respectfully traversed for two independent reasons.

First, the rejection of claim 16 depends upon the anticipation of claim 12 by Kano. As already described, that rejection cannot be maintained as to amended claim 12. Second,

claim 16 has been misinterpreted. That claim clearly described transistors with different gate oxides, not with different gate oxide thicknesses or widths, as improperly read into the claim by the Examiner. There is no description in Sessions that different transistors employ different compositions of gate oxide films, i.e., use gate oxide films with different dielectric constants. Therefore, even if claim 12 were anticipated by Kano, *prima facie* obviousness of claim 16 cannot be demonstrated by modifying Kano with Sessions.

Since amended claims 12, 13, and 16 are clearly patentable over the publications applied in rejecting the examined claims, the rejection should be withdrawn. Further, pursuant to 37 CFR 1.141, because claim 12 is allowable, all claims depending from claim 12 should be rejoined to the prosecution, namely claims 14, 15, and 17. Moreover, newly added claims 19-21 should also be allowed as depending from allowable claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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